STATE OF MONTANA

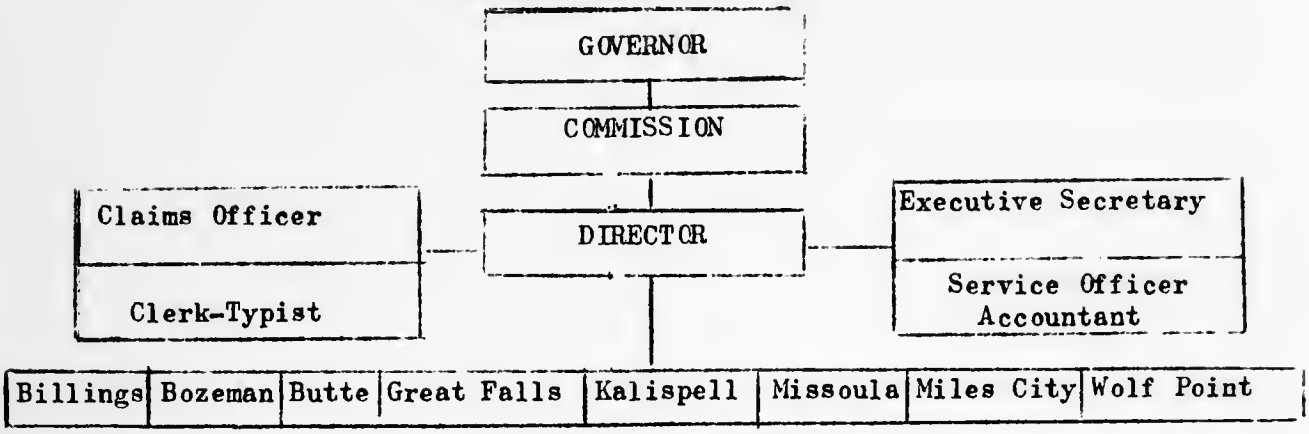
VETERANS' WELFARE COMMISSION

1967
&
1968

'a biennial report on the affairs of the veterans in montana'.

MONTANA VETERANS' WELFARE COMMISSION

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION

1. Walter Barnard — Butte
2. William Hardie — Billings
3. Charles Lelek — Lewistown
4. Kenneth Leslie — Great Falls
5. Russell Lindborg — Missoula

DIRECTOR

HARRY E. SAWYER

State Office Personnel

1. Ethel S. Trenary
2. W. Wm. Hildenbrandt
3. David W. Armstrong, Jr.
4. Marie Hinman

SERVICE OFFICERS

1. Edward J. Kilzer	Billings	5. Albert A. Miron	Kalispell
2. Robert J. Ruhl	Bozeman	6. William R. Heikkinen	Missoula
3. William M. Daley	Butte	7. Harvey A. Milton	Miles City
4. Ruddy R. Reilly	Great Falls	8. George F. Loucks	Wolf Point

STENOGRAPHERS

1. Ruth Mittelstadt	Billings	5. Arlene Soderstrom	Kalispell
2. Evelyn Hayes	Bozeman	6. Cheryl Lee	Missoula
3. Ruth Boyle	Butte	7. Judity Sprandel	Miles City
4. Marjory Summerhays	Great Falls	8. Montana J. Langager	Wolf Point

$3,759,737.28

Yes, that's the VALUE of more than 2700 claims that the Montana Veterans' Welfare Commission aided in obtaining for the veterans and their dependents of our State during the 1967-1968 biennium.

HOW OBTAINED?

Any claimant, veteran, widow, parent or orphan, must fill the proper claim with the Veterans Administration. This can be a claim for compensation, pension, educational benefits, or a loan to buy a home.

The Veterans' Welfare Commission aids these claimants by assisting in completing these forms correctly. Also in order to present a proper claim to the Veterans Administration many must be accompanied by marital documents. When necessary the Veterans' Welfare Commission Service Officers obtain official copies of Marriage Certificates, Birth Certificates, Death Certificates and Divorce Decrees. In the 1967-1968 biennium we obtained and filed 6593 of these documents. Thus it can be seen that the Veterans' Welfare Commission was of considerable assistance to claimants in obtaining these benefits.

In addition the Veterans' Welfare Commission represents the claimant when the Veterans Administration takes action on an applied for benefit. As an attorney represents a client in a court of law, the Veterans' Welfare Commission, when given the proper "Power of Attorney" represents veterans on their claims to the Veterans Administration. Statistics by the House Veterans Affairs Committee, in a study made between October 1962 and April 1966 showed that the Veterans' Welfare Commission represented veterans on 72.7% of the claims at Fort Harrison.

The Veterans Administration as an agency of the United States Government has the mission of administering veterans' benefits. These benefits are not automatically given but must be applied for. There are only three Veterans Administration contact officers in Montana - two at Fort Harrison, and one at the Miles City VA Hospital. It would be impossible for these individuals to assist all eligible veterans who wish to apply for any benefits. This is the reason for the existence and mission of the Veterans' Welfare Commission.

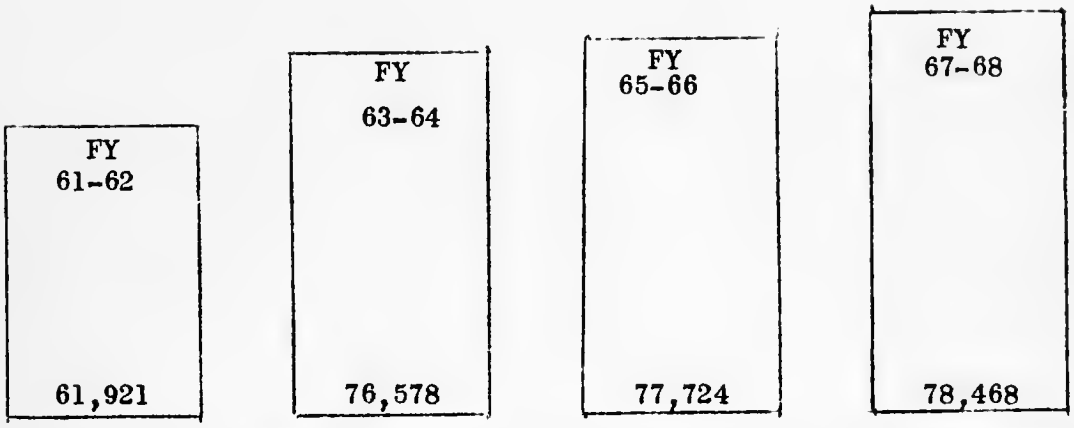
The Veterans Welfare Commission has on file 27,165 VA Form 23-22's,(so-called Power of Attorney)

There are at the present time approximately 92,000 veterans in Montana who have served in the Armed Services. At least $\frac{1}{2}$ of these will never make any claim to the Veterans Administration.

As of September 30th, the Veterans Administration at Fort Harrison had 11,613 compensation and pension awards. There were also 1,939 veterans in college or in training under the Cold War G. I. Bill.

F I E L D C O N T A C T S

(WORK LOAD)



In addition to assisting veterans and dependents in his headquarters office, each Service Officer travels from his office into an area of surrounding counties assigned to him. In each county seat at which he calls on a regularly kept schedule, he has a location where veterans or their dependents can meet with him. In addition he will make a limited number of calls on those who are physically unable to meet with him at the designated locations. Each time a Service Officer meets and assists an individual it is listed as a contact.

The increase in the work load is due to several factors. Included is the aging of World War I and World War II veterans. These veterans are applying for pensions due to disabilities not connected with service. Also, service-connected disabilities often worsen as the veteran ages. The granting by Congress of educational benefits to Cold War and Vietnam era veterans has greatly increased the work load. In addition the Cold War veterans are eligible for hospitalization and loans. The Vietnam era veterans are eligible for all wartime benefits.

There has been a decided increase in the number of death claims for widows and orphans in this biennium.

The contacts in each Field District are as follows:

Billings,	11,936	Great Falls,	12,891	Miles City,	3,838
Bozeman,	4,849	Helena,	1,759	Missoula,	14,996
Butte,	13,332	Kalispell,	10,488	Wolf Point,	4,376

The Appropriation for fiscal years 1967-1969 as allocated by the 1967 Legislative Assembly are:

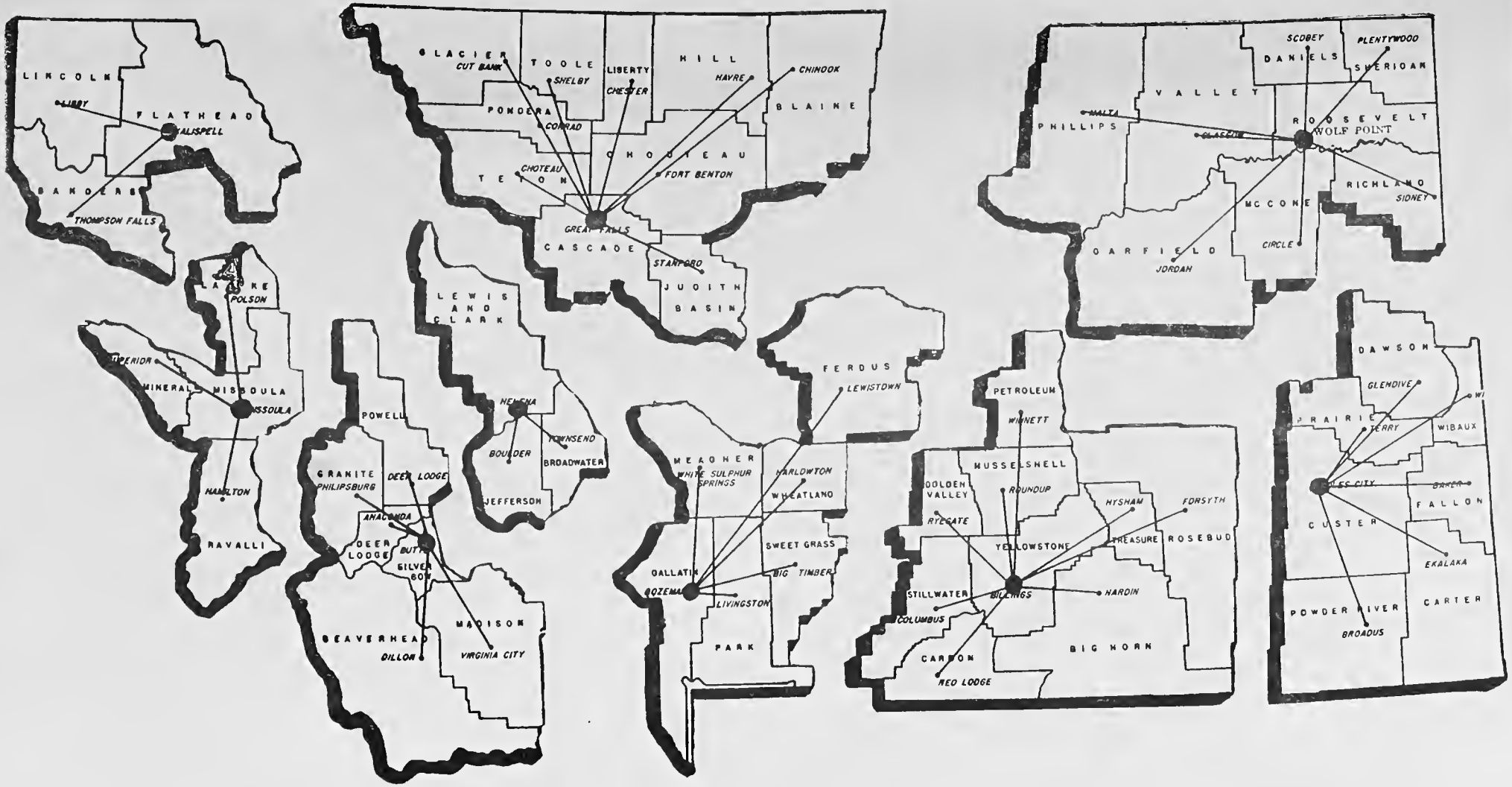
FY 1967-1968	$148,500.00
FY 1968-1969	$151,600.00

With the carry over from FY 1967-1968, the funds for FY 1968-1969 amount to $157,647.41

The expenses from July 1968, through November 1968, are:

Salaries and Wages	$42,317.34
Employee Benefits	3,601.77
Supplies and Materials	313.04
Communications	1,860.49
Utilities	36.68
Travel	6,649.49
Contracted Services	4,347.00
Special Fees	250.00
Repairs and Maintenance	5.00
Total	$59,380.81

The unexpended balance for FY 1968-1969 $98,266.60



Montana Veterans' Welfare Commission

NINE DISTRICT FIELD SERVICE AREAS.

OFFICES LOCATED IN

BUTTE	GREAT FALLS	MILES CITY
BILLINGS	HELENA	MISSOULA
BOZEMAN	KALISPELL	WOLF POINT